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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **City study shows participating families they don't need to own second car**

Twenty-two Seattle families have just finished a City of Seattle experiment to see if people could get along without their second car for six weeks, and at least one family liked it so well that they've sold their extra car. Other families say they may sell their second cars or not replace them when they wear out.

All the families in the study saved money, and most saved about \$70 per week. They found they could get around on transit, walking, bicycling and taking taxis when needed for less than the \$85 per week cost of an average second car.

"This is exactly what we wanted to find out," said Seattle Mayor Paul Schell. "We've now got data – and several example families – that will help us show others that they can get along without a second, or third, car.

The families in the "Way to Go" study commonly avoided using their second cars during the six-week experiment by turning to the bus or bike for family outings, work trips and errands. They also planned ahead and combined trips when using their other car.

"We needed to communicate well and organize our schedules so we could take care of necessary trips like doctor's appointments, school functions and soccer games," said Bobbie and David Martin of Ballard, who sold their second car last week (week of Feb. 26) after participating in the study. "We always had the one car, so we just had to decide who needed it more," said the Martins, who have two school-age children.

"I hope other families will see that they can save money by following the Martins' example and see that they don't need that extra car," said Schell. "Families making smart decisions about transportation cost and efficient use of one car, are cutting down on vehicle trips, congestion, gasoline use and, of course, air pollution," said the mayor.

"Most of the families said they will continue to take the bus or ride bicycles and think about whether they need to drive where they want to go even if they're not quite ready to sell their extra car," said Jemae Pope, Way to Go project manager in the Strategic Planning Office.

Another group of families is already being recruited for a second phase of the study to begin later this spring.

"When I have to cluster my errands on a day I have the car, then my car-less days at home are very productive, not broken up running errands," said Alison Mandaville, who lives in Arbor Heights with her husband, Doug, and daughter.

The Mandavilles found they saved \$76 per week compared to the cost of operating their second car. As a result of seeing the cost of second-car operation, the Mandavilles said they may not replace their older-model second car when it wears out and if they do it will be with a fuel efficient vehicle.

The city's Strategic Planning Office paid the participating families \$85 per week for keeping a log of their transportation activities and expenses during the six weeks they promised not to use their second cars. Families were able to use the \$85, the average cost of owning and operating a second car, for bus fares, joining a car-sharing service such as Flex Car or using taxis when needed. Most families spent only about \$15 and saved about \$70 per week, compared to operating their second cars.

By trying different ways to get around, plus more carefully planning the use of their remaining car, the 22 families made nearly 300 fewer car trips per week during the study. The 300 fewer trips per week equaled about 1,400 miles and a significant cut in air-polluting emissions.

Less driving by just these 22 families meant about 6,500 fewer pounds of carbon dioxide, CO<sub>2</sub>, were pumped into the atmosphere. If that CO<sub>2</sub> were compressed into elemental carbon such as charcoal, it would fill more than 175 10-pound bags, equal to roughly three swimming pools in volume.

Other pollutants that did not end up in the atmosphere as a result of just this brief experiment included nearly 400 pounds of carbon monoxide, about 30 pounds of nitrogen oxides and more than 50 pounds of unburned hydrocarbons. Oxides of nitrogen and unburned hydrocarbons are the two major components of smog.

What comes next?

The Strategic Planning Office is now taking applications (from City of Seattle residents only) for the second phase of the Way to Go study, said Pope. Those interested should call 615-1550 for an application or apply on the web at [www.cityofseattle.net/waytogo](http://www.cityofseattle.net/waytogo).

As one of Mayor Schell's many congestion-reduction programs, the City of Seattle will promote a Car Smart Earth Day in April to challenge all Seattle residents to think about their individual transportation choices and the impacts they have on the environment. "The Way to Go study results show that one of those choices could be selling the family's second or third car," said Schell.

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